

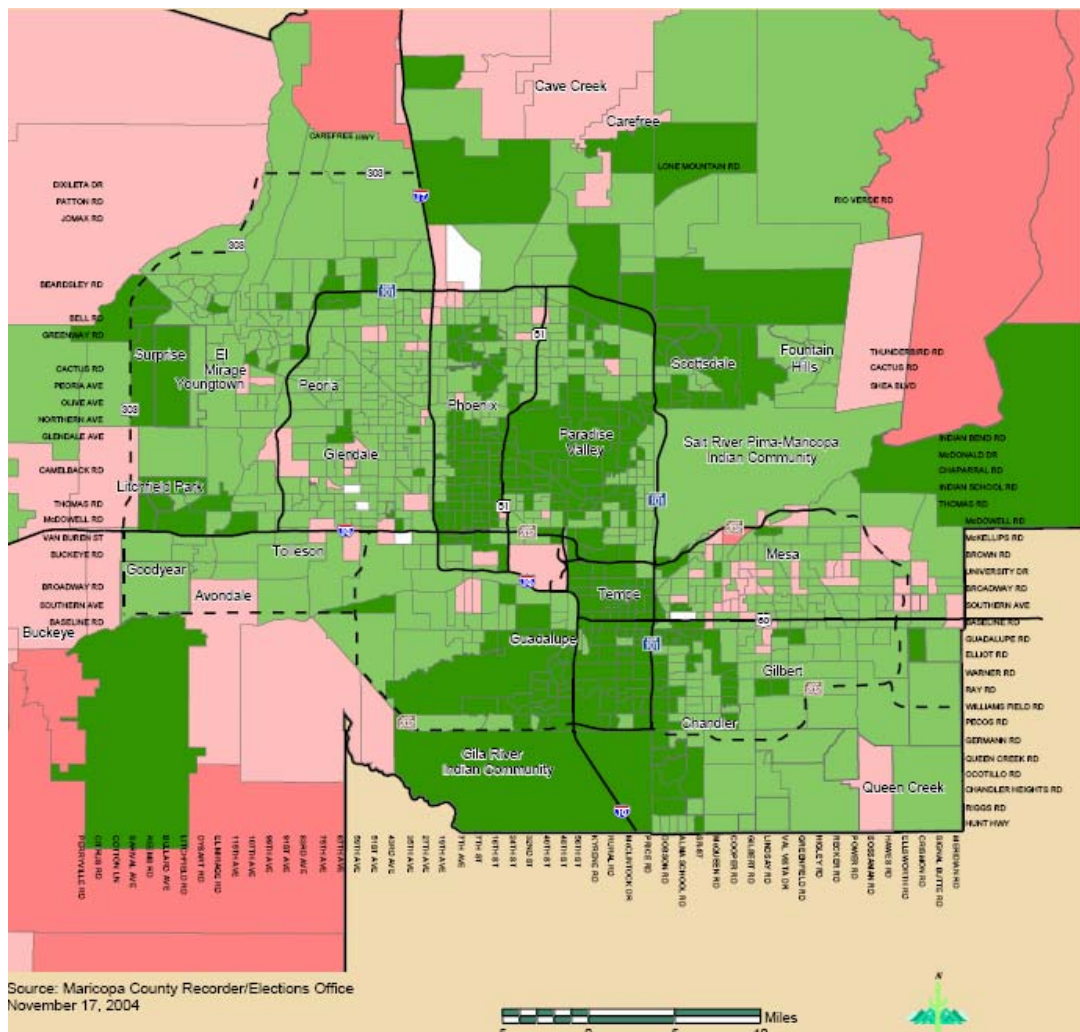
Phoenix/Maricopa County: Valley Metro RPTA

Overview

In late 2004, Phoenix approved Proposition 400, an integrated roads and transit funding package that will provide \$9 billion in regional transportation revenue over the next 20 years. The county-wide measure passed with 58% of the vote, winning in nearly every precinct and boasting the support of every mayor in Phoenix's Maricopa County. The Phoenix example is noteworthy because the regional transportation coalition was so successful in creating a clear, business-backed vision of the transportation system that voters clearly approved of.

The Region

The Regional Public Transportation Agency (RPTA) serves Maricopa County, population 3,072,149. Bus service area is 266 sq. miles, and 1,720,122 people live within the service area. RPTA operates a bus fleet, regional rideshare vanpools and dial-a-ride vehicles and 43 park and rides, and three transit centers. Light rail service and Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) is under construction and expected to begin operation in 2008.



Primary Transportation Responsibilities

	Regional Systems Planning	Financial Resources	Capital and Infrastructure Construction	Systems Operation and Maintenance
Local	-	-	-	-
County	-	-	-	-
Regional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participates in regional planning with the MPO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sales tax (from Prop. 400) Fares State & federal grants Lottery (LTAF) No taxing authority for transportation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transit infrastructure improvements Light Rail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operate regional service Paratransit Light rail (2008) Rideshare and TDM programs

In addition to operating the transit service, RPTA is also required to participate in regional transit planning, which culminates in the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). It is responsible for implementing transit service mandated by the plan. The Regional Transportation Plan was funded when voters passed Proposition 400 in November of 2004, which supplies a half-cent sales tax that helps fund projects in the RTP. Valley transit service upgrades will be made over the course of the next 20 years based on funding availability, and project timelines. In addition, the authority is responsible for transit public information, and marketing for both the Maricopa County Trip Reduction Program and the Clean Air Campaign.

Additional planning: RPTA has a close relationship with the Transportation Policy Committee (TPC) of the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) which is in overall charge of developing the Regional Transportation Plan. The TPC is a 22-member committee made up of representatives from cities and towns throughout region, business leaders, Arizona DOT, Maricopa County, the freight industry, transit providers and the Citizens Transportation Oversight Committee. Some features of the current plan:

- New and improved freeways
- Improved streets and intersections
- Nearly 28 miles of extensions to the already planned 30-mile segment of the light rail system
- Consistent bus service across city boundaries
- Safety planning, computerized freeway management, litter control and landscaping

The RTP contains transit improvements, including BRT and light rail, to be rolled out in four phases over the course of the next 20 years.

Structure

RPTA is a political subdivision of the State of Arizona overseen by a board of elected officials. Valley Metro membership is voluntary, and open to all municipalities in Maricopa County and the county government. Current members are: Avondale, Chandler, El Mirage, Town of Gilbert, Glendale, Maricopa County, Mesa, Peoria, Phoenix, Scottsdale, Surprise, and Tempe, each represented on the board by Mayors or Council members. There is one Maricopa County supervisor. Member municipalities self-select who is on the board, and when they are recalled.

Financing

The RPTA has a total current budget of \$173,227,687. Financing for this is as follows: Bus fares \$ 30,548,862, Dial-a-Ride fares \$ 1,230,403, Vanpool fares \$ 1,791,450 and Federal, state and local funds \$ 139,656,972. It has Annual Operating Expenses operating within the budget of \$173,227,687. Its operating expenses break down as: Bus service \$ 143,564,423, Dial-a-Ride service \$ 27,961,152, and Vanpool service \$ 1,702,112.

As members of the Valley Metro, each agency must spend Local Transportation Funds (LTAf) revenues from the Arizona Powerball Lottery on public transportation. An agency with a population of 300,000 or more must spend all of its funds on transit services. Agencies of 60,000 or more must commit at least one-third of the LTAf funds to transit services and those areas with a population of less than 60,000 must commit three-quarters of the LTAf funds to transit services.

Governance Elements

- **Municipal Membership is Voluntary or Required**

By creating Valley Metro, Maricopa voters chose to create a new transit agency rather than vest transit functions with the existing Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG), which is the MPO entity. However, Valley Transit and the MAG are required by statute to coordinate planning functions.

- **The Size of the Region**

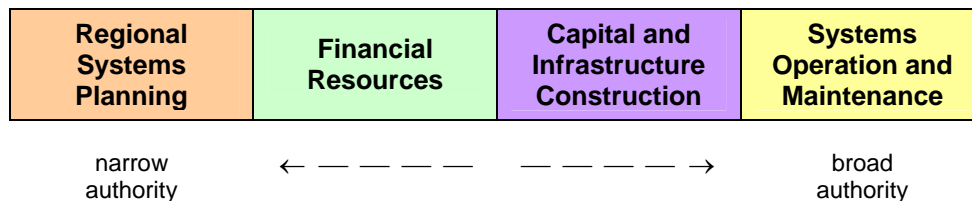
The MAG boundaries capture most the regional growth do not cross county lines.

- **The Mode Responsibilities of the Authority**

Valley Metro is responsible for transit services.

- **The Transportation Functions of the Authority**

Valley Metro is engaged in the full spectrum of transit delivery, planning, funding, building, and operating.



- **Land Use, Economic Development, and other Responsibilities**

Valley Transit participates in the regional planning process with the MAG, but does not have any other significant responsibilities. MAG itself is responsible for transportation planning, but not land use planning beyond what is required of it as an MPO.

- **Regional Authority Leadership**

Valley Transit is governed by an appointed board comprised of municipally elected leaders.

- **Revenue-Sharing or Sub-Regional Equity**

Valley Transit does not have a revenue-sharing or sub-regional equity program. However, the array of projects funded by Proposition 400 are fairly equitably spread throughout the region.

Additional info

1985: Arizona Legislature passed a law enabling citizens of Maricopa County to vote on a sales tax increase to fund regional freeway improvements and provide for the creation of the Regional Public Transportation Authority (RPTA). In October of that year, Maricopa County voters overwhelmingly supported passage of a proposition which approved a one-half cent sales tax to fund freeway construction and provide \$5 million (inflated annually) as seed money for regional transit service expansion. The RPTA will received this funding through 2005. The RPTA was charged with developing a regional transit plan, finding a dedicated funding source for transit, and developing and operating a regional transit system.

1993: RPTA Board adopted Valley Metro as the identity for the regional transit system. The Valley Metro name and graphic design were chosen to help unify public transit systems in the Valley. In addition, a number of cities have adopted this regional identity into their fleet of vehicles.

1996: city of Tempe passed a half-cent sales tax dedicated for transit, allowing them to expand their existing bus service and explore future options, such as light rail.

1998: the city of Mesa passed its Quality of Life half-cent sales tax, which dedicated a small portion for transit, with the remainder going toward parks and recreation and police and fire departments.

2000: the city of Phoenix passed a four-tenths of a percent sales tax for improvements to local bus service, Bus Rapid Transit (beginning 2003), Light Rail (beginning 2008), Neighborhood Mini-Bus Service, and more.

2001: the city of Glendale passed a half-cent sales tax dedicated for transit and other transportation improvements. Its transit plan was modeled after the city of Phoenix's plan.

2005: Peoria voters approved a three-tenths cent sales tax increase dedicated to funding transportation projects and services in Peoria, for the next 20 years up to \$200 million in projects that a citizen committee has identified as critical to the city's transportation infrastructure.